1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
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782 siderable range of beliefs are all longer and more complicated, and often contain references to events which happened before the spiritual beings to whom they are addressed attained their full power as *yaku*.

For convenience the invocations are consecutively numbered and grouped according to their purpose, for we believe that this arrangement, though not ideal, is on the whole the most suitable[1]. In each group the invocations progress from simple to more complicated.

782 192 198 It will be noted that in many if not all of these invocations animals and articles of food are not mentioned by their usual name, but are called by some other name or described by a periphrasis. A special vocabulary, largely but not entirely the same as that used in invoking the *yaku*, is used by the Veddas when hunting and indeed whenever travelling through the jungle. The relation of this jungle language to the other languages of the island will be discussed in Chapter XV, meanwhile it is only necessary to note that in one form or another it is spread over a great part of the island and that it is known by the name *kaele basa* "jungle language." The object of the *kaele basa* has been well explained by Mr Parker who has allowed me to take the following quotation from the proof-sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. "Strange to say, the Kandian Sinhalese and the Wanniyas apparently imitate the Vaeddas while they are hunting in the forests,...and use another series of expressions...for many...animals, to the exclusion of the usual names for them. They have acquired a belief that unless

[1] An alternative arrangement would have been to group these invocations geographically; the following list will enable the reader to do this with ease.

List of Invocations and the localities from which each were collected.

Bandaraduwa. Nos. 7, 15, 26, 34.
Bulugahaladena. Nos. 9, 10.
Dambani. Nos. 2, 12, 13.
Godatalawa. Nos. 3, 5, 20, 24.
Henebedda. Nos. 14, 19, 21.
Kalukalaeba. No. 6.
Sitala Wanniya. Nos. 1, 11, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36.
Uniche. Nos. 8, 17, 22, 28.
Unuwatura Bubula. Nos. 25, 37.
Wellampelle. No. 4.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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special dialect be employed while they are in the forest, they cannot expect to meet with any success in seeking honey, or hunting, or in avoiding dangerous animals.

"This dialect...consists of the employment of new words not only for animals but also for a few other nouns, and for verbs used to denote acts most commonly performed on such trips. In addition, all negative (that is, unlucky) modes of expression are totally debarred from use on such occasions, as well as the words meaning 'insufficient' and 'too much,' which are inauspicious as indicating dissatisfaction with the number or quantity to which they are applied."

Although in some instances the word used when addressing the *yaku* is not the precise word used by the same Veddas while hunting it is convenient, and we think reasonable, to regard the *yaku* language as a part of the *kaele basa*.

The only other linguistic feature of these invocations that requires comment is the abundant use of the adjective *ran* "golden." The significance of this in a particular and somewhat puzzling instance is discussed in a footnote to invocation No. XXI, so that it suffices here to record our belief that among the Veddas the expression is laudatory and is the equivalent of "excellent," "admirable." In invocations used while collecting honey the expression "jewelled" is used with almost equal freedom, e.g. "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI, and is simply to be understood as a laudatory expression.

Invocations to the Nae Yaku.

Sitala Wanniya.

1. *Āyu bōwā. Āyu bōwā. Nae koṭṭasuwā*[1], *nae sindawā.*
Hudu hambā welaṭa aḍagaha dunnā kanawā bunnā.
Kisi waradak sitanna epā, epā kanawā bonawā.

Salutation! Salutation! Part of (our) relatives!
Multitude of relatives! Having called (you) at the (right) time (we) gave (you) white sambā (rice); (you) ate, (you) drank. Do not think any wrong (of us); we also eat (and) drink.

[1] *Koṭṭasuwā* for *koṭṭāsaya*, a part, section.

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Although Dr Barnett considers that many of the Vedda periphrases seem to point primarily to a low level of culture, and although we believe that we should do wrong to ignore the influence of some such process as that which we have sketched, we think it probable that many of the expressions in the Vedda language (so called) arose as the result of a deliberate effort to mystify.

At the time when the Veddas began to use Sinhalese as their habitual mode of communication they would find it convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to be able to discuss matters between themselves in the presence of Sinhalese, especially Sinhalese traders, without allowing the latter to understand what they were saying. This necessity would naturally lead them to invent periphrases and onomatopoeic words while it would encourage mispronunciation and the use of archaic forms.

Further evidence in favour of this view may be gathered from other Indian tribes and even from the Veddas themselves. Dr Rivers found that the Todas have a secret language which consists of a large number of expressions which they use in the presence of Badagas, Tamils and others, when they wish to be understood only by themselves. Many of the Badagas and Tamils with whom the Todas associate no doubt pick up some knowledge of their language, and even if this were not the case the Toda language is sufficiently like Tamil to enable a stranger to understand part of what is said. In consequence the Todas have adopted a secret code for use among themselves which they call *kalikatpimi*, literally 'stolen we tie,' while in distinction the ordinary language is called *itherkelv* or 'front fact[1].'"

Thus "cook food in milk" which in the ordinary language is *pâts âdr* literally "milk cook" becomes in the secret language

who have acquired some knowledge of their tongue purposely use simplified and incomplete grammatical forms.

Mr Parker remarks that our statement concerning the vocabulary of the peasant Sinhalese is valid only so far as it applies to their ordinary conversation in which they use "a simple and limited" vocabulary, but that in working through his large collection of Folk-tales he found that "the vocabulary of the villagers was a very extensive one."

[1] *The Todas*, p. 616.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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mauk mâr pud mâdu tarak idiki literally "four sides come three on up put," i.e. "put what comes from the four teats upon the three (stones which support the cooking pot)." Further the leg may be called *metipol* "walk thing," also used for foot-prints, or *pâmi âlar pî pol* "thing that goes into the earth," while many other things have secret names; thus butter is called *pelthpol* "white thing" and clarified butter *kâritpol* "melted thing."

All this seems to indicate that the so-called Vedda dialect arose, at least in part, as a deliberately invented secret language, and this view is supported by an anecdote told by Nevill which shows that even at the present time the formation of periphrases and the use of onomatopoeic words comes readily to the older Veddas, allowing them to communicate with their fellows in the presence of Sinhalese without using the ordinary words.

An old Vedda who died before 1886 was "fond of encouraging the others to learn a patois which strangers could not understand, and used to illustrate its use by a story of his being overtaken by a party of pilgrims to Katragam, who insisted on his accompanying them as guide some distance. A lad, partly a Vaedda, was with him. On the way they heard a deer give the peculiar bleating cry made when they are seized by a leopard. Seeing his companions did not understand it, he went on, and entering into conversation with the boy, sent him away, saying loudly and rapidly so as not to excite suspicion, Bûs ki bâs ki adina atak gena at baruwak gena pimbina atak gena, thopa ammât appât enda kiyâpa. This means, "Bûs was said, bâs was said, bringing the bow, axe and fire-stick, tell your mother and father to come." Here the bow is called the "pulling-bough," the axe is called the "bough heavy" or "heavy in the hand," and the fire-stick, the "blowing bough," in allusion to the blowing of the spark into a flame. *Bûs* imitates the snort of the leopard as it springs on the deer, and *bâs* the cry of the deer. The old man delighted to tell this tale, showing his own wit, and would then say "and because the boy knew huntsman's craft and how to speak aloud but secretly, he slipped away and called his parents. I went back as soon as I could, and we all had a grand feast, for the leopard had not time to eat much before the boy's parents were there[1]."

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 181.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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192 At Sitala Wanniya we learnt for the first time that two classes of words could be distinguished in the Vedda dialect. Words of the first class are commonly employed by the Veddas among themselves or their use is compulsory when hunting or travelling in the jungle; the second class contains words which are used only in invoking the *yaku*.

The monitor lizard commonly called *munda* becomes in the *yaka* language *bimbada ganeka*, "one whose belly touches the ground"; the pig *dola* is called *kosdika*; the spotted deer *gemberupodya* is called *depatam magala*; the sambar *kankuna* becomes *gaura magala*; and the wandura monkey *botakuna* is called *ude kelina*.

These were the only animals which were given *yaka* names at Sitala Wanniya, but betel leaves, usually known as *paengeri kola*, coconut milk *polikiri* and rice *depotulu* all used in offerings to the *yaku* are spoken of on these occasions as *nilikola*, literally "dark leaves," *ran kiri daluo* "golden bud milk" and *hudu hamba* from *sudu sambā*, lit. "white rice," respectively[1].

Probably all the wilder Veddas at one time used special words when addressing the *yaku*, for even at Rerenkadi among the sophisticated Veddas of the chena settlement we heard of the former existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, while at Lindegala the few words of the Vedda dialect that were still remembered were said to have been used especially in *yaku* ceremonies[2].

At Sitala Wanniya we obtained the expressions *yakada heremitiya*, literally "iron walking staff," for boy, and *hanukanna kilote*, "box for lime" or "lime eating box," for girl. We were not able to satisfy ourselves as to the significance of these metaphors, which were said to be used only in *yaku* ceremonies. According to one account the expression refers to the genitals of the sexes, another explanation states that a boy is a strong support to his relatives, while a girl is as precious as a supply of chewing materials.

198 197 The hypothesis that the Vedda language arose in part as a secret language explains how it is that at the present day the

[1] *Sambā* is the name of a superior variety of rice.

[2] Nilgala, Bendiyagalge and Bandaraduwa were all visited before Sitala Wanniya where we discovered the existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, and no questions especially bearing on this matter were asked at these places.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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Vedda dialect is best preserved among the Village Veddas of Bintenne.

The people of Dambani and Bulugahaladena whose condition we have described in Chapter II and whom we have specially in mind as typical Veddas of the Bintenne are precisely in that stage of development in which a secret language would be most useful. They do not lead, and apparently have not for a considerable number of generations led the wandering life which until recently characterised the Veddas living further to the east, nor on the other hand do they even now show any tendency to be absorbed by the peasant Sinhalese of the province in which they live. They in fact constitute small autonomous communities enjoying considerable prestige in the eyes of their neighbours both on account of their ancestry and their reputed fierceness. Not only is their dialect directly useful to them in their trading with the neighbouring Sinhalese, but as we soon discovered their use of what their neighbours consider a language different from their own greatly enhances their prestige.

They have thus had a motive for keeping up if not for enlarging their store of periphrases and metaphors which probably never existed among the wilder, less sophisticated Veddas, who only preserve the old names of certain animals or foods which are used in *yaku* ceremonies or which have become part of their jungle language.

From this point of view we may detect three stages in the evolution of the present Vedda dialect. In the first stage their original language is effaced by an archaic form of the Sinhalese; the formation from this of a large number of secret words constitutes the second stage, while the third stage is represented by the process of substitution of more or less modern and colloquial Sinhalese words for the majority of archaic words and forms, during which process many of the modern words underwent phonetic changes.

The following sentences taken down from men of Bulugahaladena show the characteristics of the Vedda dialect as it survives among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. The notes given after each sentence have been supplied by Mr Gunasekara, the sentences themselves are written down in the form in which

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattegama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Selavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[563] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth